



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KUALA LUMPUR**

ALI KHAMIS ALI

FPP 2002 10

**FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KUALA LUMPUR**

By

ALI KHAMIS ALI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2002



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My late father, Khamis bin Ali

My mother, Sharife Bai Ali

My perpetual wife, Khadija Ali Sheikh

My daughter, Khairaat

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KUALA LUMPUR**

By

ALI KHAMIS ALI

July 2002

Chairperson: Associate Professor Dr. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie

Faculty: Educational Studies

This research was an attempt to study factors associated with the occupational commitment of secondary school teachers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The research design was a descriptive correlational study and the data were collected using questionnaires. The study followed a survey method which used a stratified sampling technique to select 510 teachers. A response rate of 83.23% (433) was considered to be valid. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data of the study.

The research findings showed that teachers' levels of affective, continuance, normative and overall occupational commitment were moderate. Female teachers indicated higher affective, normative and overall occupational commitment than did males. Malay teachers indicated higher affective and overall occupational commitment than did teachers from Chinese, Indian and other ethnic groups. Both non-graduate teachers and teachers with a Bachelor's degree showed higher

affective, continuance, normative and overall occupational commitment than did teachers with a Master's degree. Years of experience in a current school had a significant correlation with continuance occupational commitment; whereas number of children had a significant correlation with overall occupational commitment.

Furthermore, the findings showed that supportive principal behaviour, engaged teacher behaviour, frustrated teacher behaviour, affective organizational commitment, continuance organizational commitment, normative organizational commitment, role conflict, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation have significant correlations with affective, continuance, normative and overall occupational commitment. Role ambiguity has a significant correlation with affective, normative and overall occupational commitment. Intimate teacher behaviour has a significant correlation with only affective occupational commitment.

Multiple regression analysis showed that non-graduate qualifications, normative organisational commitment, and intrinsic motivation were significant factors to predict affective, continuance, normative and overall occupational commitment. Also, the multiple regression analysis indicated that a Bachelor's degree and extrinsic motivation were significant factors to predict affective, normative and overall occupational commitment, whereas continuance organisational commitment was a significant factor for affective and continuance occupational commitment. Ethnic groups and frustrated teacher behaviour were only significant factors for affective and overall occupational commitment; whereas role conflict was only a significant factor for continuance occupational commitment. Generally, the study

indicated that normative organizational commitment was the most significant factor in explaining the variances of affective, continuance, normative and overall occupational commitment. Based on the findings of the study, a model for understanding research on teachers' occupational commitment was proposed.

The study mainly recommended that practitioners should clearly understand the distinct components of occupational commitment and factors associated with each of them whenever they want to establish a policy for teachers' occupational commitment. Finally, other recommendations for practice and further research were made.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan memperoleh ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**FAKTOR BERKAITAN KOMITMEN PEKERJAAN DI KALANGAN GURU
SEKOLAH MENENGAH DI KUALA LUMPUR**

Oleh

ALI KHAMIS ALI

Julai 2002

Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Dr. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie

Fakulti : Pengajian Pendidikan

Penyelidikan ini adalah usaha untuk mengkaji faktor yang berkaitan dengan komitmen pekerjaan di kalangan guru sekolah menengah di Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Reka bentuk penyelidikan adalah kajian korelasi deskriptif dan data dihipunkan dengan menggunakan soal selidik. Kajian ini mematuhi kaedah tinjauan yang menggunakan teknik persampelan berstrata untuk memilih 510 guru. Kadar respons adalah 83.23% (433). Kedua-dua perangkaan deskriptif dan statistik inferensi digunakan untuk menganalisis data kajian.

Dapatan penyelidikan menunjukkan bahawa aras komitmen afektif, keberterusan, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhannya adalah sederhana. Guru wanita menunjukkan komitmen afektif, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan yang lebih tinggi daripada guru lelaki. Guru Melayu menunjukkan komitmen afektif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan yang lebih tinggi daripada guru Cina, India dan kumpulan etnik lain. Kedua-dua guru bukan graduan dan guru berkecualan ijazah Bachelor menunjukkan komitmen afektif,

keberterusan, normatif, dan pekerjaan yang lebih tinggi daripada guru berkelayakan sarjana. Pengalaman di sekolah semasa memperlihatkan korelasi yang signifikan dengan komitmen pekerjaan berterusan, manakala bilangan anak mempunyai korelasi signifikan dengan komitmen pekerjaan keseluruhan.

Seterusnya, dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa tingkah laku pengetua yang menyokong, tingkah laku guru yang setia, tingkah laku guru yang kecewa, komitmen organisasi afektif, komitmen organisasi keberterusan, komitmen organisasi normatif, konflik peranan, motivasi dalaman dan motivasi luaran mempunyai korelasi signifikan dengan komitmen afektif, keberterusan, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan. Ketaksaan peranan adalah berkorelasi secara signifikan dengan komitmen afektif, normatif, dan pekerjaan keseluruhan. Tingkah laku intim guru mempunyai korelasi signifikan dengan hanya komitmen pekerjaan afektif.

Analisis regresi berbilang menunjukkan bahawa kelayakan bukan graduat, komitmen organisasi normatif dan motivasi dalaman adalah faktor signifikan untuk komitmen afektif, keberterusan, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan. Di samping itu, analisis regresi berbilang menunjukkan bahawa ijazah bachelar dan motivasi luaran adalah faktor signifikan untuk komitmen afektif, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan, sementara komitmen organisasi keberterusan adalah faktor signifikan untuk komitmen afektif dan pekerjaan keberterusan. Kumpulan etnik dan tingkah laku guru yang kecewa adalah faktor signifikan untuk meramal komitmen afektif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan, sementara konflik peranan hanyalah faktor signifikan untuk meramal komitmen pekerjaan keberterusan. Pada keseluruhannya, kajian ini

menunjukkan bahawa komitmen organisasi normatif adalah faktor yang paling signifikan bagi menjelaskan varians komitmen afektif, keberterusan, normatif dan pekerjaan keseluruhan. Berdasarkan dapatan kajian, satu model untuk memahami penyelidikan tentang komitmen pekerjaan guru telah dicadangkan.

Kajian ini terutamanya mencadangkan bahawa pengamal harus memahami dengan jelas perbezaan komponen komitmen pekerjaan dan faktor yang berkaitan dengan setiap komponen itu apabila hendak menentukan satu dasar untuk komitmen pekerjaan guru. Akhir sekali dikemukakan juga cadangan lain untuk amalan dan penyelidikan selanjutnya.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praises go to Almighty Allah for all the blessings that enable me complete this task.

I wish to express my gratitude to everyone who contributed to my studies until this stage. However, it is very hard to mention all the people who made indisputable contributions to my study. I will limit myself here to mentioning a few of them as representatives of others; but I am grateful to all of them. My heartfelt grateful acknowledgement and appreciation go to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hj. Zaidatol Akmaliah Lope Pihie, the Chairperson for my Supervisory Committee and the three members of the Supervisory Committee, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zakaria Kasa, Dr. Bahaman Abu Samah and Dr. Foo Say Fook for their continuous constructive ideas, guidance, encouragement and assistance in the preparation and completion of this thesis. I am especially grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ab. Rahim Bakar, the Chairperson of the Examination Committee, for giving comprehensive comments and feedback during the examination. I am thankful to the Independent Examiner, Datin Prof. Dr. Noran Fauziah Yaakub of Universiti Utara Malaysia, who provided useful comments and feedback for the improvement of this thesis.

I am grateful to the staff of the Faculty of Education Studies and to the staff of the Graduate School, Universiti Putra Malaysia, for their support during my study.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to the Malaysian Ministry of Education and the State Education Department of the Federal Territory, Kuala Lumpur, for providing me with the required data and granting me permission to conduct my research in their schools. I wish to extend my thanks to the teachers in the Federal Territory for their participation and help in obtaining data for this research. Thanks are also extended to the school principals in the Federal Territory for their assistance during data collection and helping me contact the teachers in their schools.

I am indebted to Dr. Ahmad M. Hassoubah who was like a father to me in my studies. His support, encouragement and motivation in many ways will always remain in my heart and mind. My special thanks go to Dr. Zaleha Izhah for her motherly support and Ms. Suhailah Hussien for her early attempts to translate my instruments. My appreciation is extended to Ms. Rosmawati Binti Saad and Mr. Lee Chooi Bee for their great effort in helping me in distributing and collecting the questionnaires in the schools of Kuala Lumpur.

Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and affection to my beloved wife, Khadija Ali Sheikh, for her understanding, encouragement and patience throughout my graduate programme, that made this work a success.

I certify that an Examination Committee met on 12th July 2002 to conduct the final examination of Ali Khamis Ali on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "Factors Associated with Occupational Commitment of Secondary School Teachers in Kuala Lumpur" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

AB. RAHIM BAKAR, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

ZAIDATOL AKMALIAH LOPE PIHIE, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

ZAKARIA KASA, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

BAHAMAN ABU SAMAH, Ph.D

Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

FOO SAY FOOI, Ph.D.

Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

NORAN FAUZIAH YAAKUB, Ph.D.

Professor
School of Languages and Scientific Thinking
Universiti Utara Malaysia
(Independent Examiner)



SHAMSHER MOHAMAD RAMADILI, Ph.D.

Professor/Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date 15 AUG 2002

This thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Members of the Supervisory Committee are as follows:

ZAIDATOL AKMALIAH LOPE PIHIE, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairperson)

ZAKARIA KASA, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

BAHAMAN ABU SAMAH, Ph.D.

Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

FOO SAY FOOL, Ph.D.

Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

AINI IDERIS, Ph.D.

Professor/Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



ALI KHAMIS ALI

Date: 14/08/2002

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
APPROVAL	xi
DECLARATION	xiii
LIST OF TABLES	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES	xxi
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	1
Educational Changes in Malaysia and their Impact	4
Integrated Secondary School Curriculum (ISSC)	5
Value Inculcation	7
Critical and Creative Thinking Skills	8
Smart School Programme	10
Current Issues in Malaysian Teaching Profession	14
Statement of the Problem	27
Objectives of the Study	29
Research Questions	30
Significance of the Study	31
Limitation of the Study	34
Definition of Terms	35
II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	38
Introduction	38
The Concept of Commitment	38
Definition of Commitment	40
Organisational Commitment	41
Attitudinal Approach of Commitment	41
Behavioural Approach of Commitment	43
The Relationship between Attitudinal and Behavioural Approaches of Commitment	44
A Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment	46
Affective Commitment	48
Continuance Commitment	50
Normative Commitment	51
Occupational Commitment	52
Related Theories of Commitment	57
General View of Motivation Theories	57



	Theoretical Relationship between Motivation and Commitment	59
	Expectancy Theory of Work Motivation	62
	Path-Goal Theory of Leadership	70
	School Organisational Climate	75
	Role States	77
	Side-bets Theory	79
	Empirical Studies on Commitment	83
	Organisational and Occupational Commitment	83
	Organisational Climate and Commitment	92
	Role States and Commitment	95
	Motivation and Commitment	96
	Demographic Variables and Commitment	99
	Age	99
	Gender	104
	Experience	108
	Years (Tenure) in the Present School	111
	Ethnic Group	113
	Academic Qualifications	115
	Marital Status	118
	Number of Children	121
	Summary	122
	Theoretical Framework of the Study	123
III	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	129
	Introduction	129
	Research Design	130
	Population and Sample	131
	Procedures for Determining a Sample Size	131
	Power, Effect Size and Sample Size Estimations	132
	Sample Technique	138
	Conceptual Framework of the Study	141
	Instrumentation	143
	Research Questionnaires	144
	Demographic Variables	144
	Occupational Commitment Questionnaire (OCCQ)	145
	Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)	151
	Organisational Climate Description	
	Questionnaire-Rutgers Secondary (OCDQ-RS)	155
	Role States Questionnaire (RSQ)	158
	Motivation Factors Questionnaire (MFQ)	160
	Pilot Study	161
	Data Collection	162
	Methods of Data Analysis	164

IV	FINDINGS	171
	Introduction	171
	Preliminary Analysis of Data	171
	Respondents' Demographic Variables	175
	Gender, Ethnic Group, Marital Status and Academic Qualifications	175
	Age, Number of Children, Teaching Experience and Years in the Present School	177
	Levels of Occupational Commitment, Organisational Commitment, Perceptions of Organisational Climate, Role States and Motivation	178
	Levels of Occupational Commitment	179
	Levels Organisational Commitment	181
	Levels of Perceptions of Organisational Climate	183
	Levels of Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict	187
	Levels of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation	188
	Occupational Commitment According to Gender, Marital Status, Ethnic Groups and Academic Qualifications	189
	Occupational Commitment According to Gender	190
	Occupational Commitment According to Marital Status	192
	Occupational Commitment According to Ethnic Groups	192
	Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	196
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Demographic Variables, Organisational Commitment, Organisational Climate, Role States and Motivation	200
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Selected Demographic Variables	201
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Perceptions of Organisational Climate	203
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Organisational Commitment	205
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Role States	207
	The Relationship of Occupational Commitment with Motivation	208
	Significant Predictors for Occupational Commitment	208
	Significant Predictors for Affective Occupational Commitment	209
	Significant Predictors for Continuance Occupational Commitment	212
	Significant Predictors for Normative Occupational Commitment	214
	Significant Predictors for Overall Occupational Commitment	216

V	SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	219
	Introduction	219
	Objectives of the Study	219
	Summary	220
	Methodology	220
	Summary of the Findings	221
	Discussion	228
	Level of Teachers' Commitment	228
	Occupational Commitment with the Selected Demographic Variables	229
	Occupational Commitment with Organisational Commitment	233
	Occupational Commitment with Organisational Climate	235
	Occupational Commitment with Role States	240
	Occupational Commitment with Motivation	242
	Significant Predictors for Occupational Commitment	245
	Contribution of Normative Organisational Commitment to Occupational Commitment	247
	A Proposed Research Model for Understanding Teachers' Occupational Commitment	248
	Conclusion	252
	Implications for Theories	254
	Implication for Expectancy Theory	254
	Implication for Path-goal Theory	255
	Implication for Becker's Side-bets Theory	256
	Recommendations	256
	Recommendations for Practice	256
	Recommendations for Future Research	260
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	263
	APPENDICES	283
A	FIGURES FOR EXPLORATORY DATA ANALYSIS	284
B	POST-HOC TESTS FOR ANOVA	295
C	ETA RESULTS FOR CATEGORICAL VARIABLES	298
D	QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH	302
E	QUESTIONNAIRE IN BAHASA MALAYSIA	314
F	LIST OF SELECTED SCHOOLS	325
G	LETTERS	327
	BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR	334

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Number of Teachers by Zones and Selected Sample for the Study	140
3.2 Reliability Coefficients for the Study	162
3.3 Summary of Statistics Used According to Research Questions of the Study	168
3.4 Scoring Key for Occupational Commitment Scales	169
3.5 Scoring Key for Organizational Commitment Scales	169
3.6 Scoring Key for Organizational Climate Scales	169
3.7 Scoring Key for Role State Scales	169
3.8 Scoring Key for Motivation Scales	170
4.1 Cook's Distance of Perceptions of Affective, Continuance and Normative Occupational Commitment	173
4.2 Test for Collinearity of Perceptions of Independent Variables	175
4.3 Respondents' Distribution According to Gender, Ethnic Group, Marital Status and Academic Qualifications	176
4.4 Respondents' Distribution According to Age, Number of Children, Teaching Experience and Years in the Present School	177
4.5 Respondents' Level of Overall Occupational Commitment	180
4.6 Respondents' Level of Affective Occupational Commitment	180
4.7 Respondents' Level of Continuance Occupational Commitment	181
4.8 Respondents' Level of Normative Occupational Commitment	181
4.9 Respondents' Level of Affective Organisational Commitment	182
4.10 Respondents' Level of Continuance Organisational Commitment	183
4.11 Respondents' Level of Normative Organisational Commitment	183
4.12 Level of Respondents' Perceptions of Supportive Principal Behaviour	184

4.13	Level of Respondents' Perceptions of Directive Principal Behaviour	185
4.14	Level of Respondents' Perceptions of Engaged Teacher Behaviour	185
4.15	Level of Respondents' Perceptions of Frustrated Teacher Behaviour	186
4.16	Level of Respondents' Perceptions of Intimacy Teacher Behaviour	187
4.17	Respondents' Level of Role Ambiguity	187
4.18	Respondents' Level of Role Conflict	188
4.19	Respondents' Level of Intrinsic Motivation	189
4.20	Respondents' Level of Extrinsic Motivation	189
4.21	Results of Two-Tailed t-tests of Respondents' Occupational Commitment According to Gender	191
4.22	Results of Two-Tailed t-test of Respondents' Occupational Commitment According to Marital Status	192
4.23	One-Way ANOVA of Respondents' Occupational Commitment According to Ethnic Groups	194
4.24	One-Way ANOVA of Respondents' Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	196
4.25	Correlation Coefficients of Occupational Commitment with Demographic Variables	202
4.26	Correlation Coefficients of Occupational Commitment with Perceptions of Organisational Climate	204
4.27	Correlation Coefficients of Occupational Commitment with Organisational Commitment, Role States and Motivation	206
4.28	Stepwise Multiple Regression of Affective Occupational Commitment on the Independent Variables	210
4.29	Stepwise Multiple Regression of Continuance Occupational Commitment on the Independent Variables	212
4.30	Stepwise Multiple Regression of Normative Occupational Commitment on the Independent Variables	214
4.31	Stepwise Multiple Regression of Overall Occupational Commitment on the Independent Variables	216

B.1	Results of Benferroni Tests for Ethnic Groups	296
B.2	Benferroni Results for Academic Qualifications	297
C.1	Eta Results According to Gender	299
C.2	Eta Results According to Marital Status	299
C.3	Eta Results According to Ethnic Groups	299
C.4	Eta Results According to Malay Ethnic Group	299
C.5	Eta Results According to Chinese Ethnic Group	300
C.6	Eta Results According to Indian Ethnic Group	300
C.7	Eta Results According to Other Ethnic Groups	300
C.8	Eta Results According to Academic Qualifications	300
C.9	Eta Results According to Non-graduate Qualifications	301
C.10	Eta Results According to Bachelor's Degree	301
C.11	Eta Results According to Master's Degree	301

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
2.1 Porter and Lawler's Model of Expectancy Theory	64
2.2 Basic Factors in Path-Goal Theory	71
3.1 Research Model	142
4.1 Affective Occupational Commitment According to Ethnic Groups	195
4.2 Overall Occupational Commitment According to Ethnic Groups	195
4.3 Affective Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	199
4.4 Continuance Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	199
4.5 Normative Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	199
4.6 Overall Occupational Commitment According to Academic Qualifications	200
5.1 A Proposed Research Model for Understanding of Teacher's Occupational Commitment	251
A.1 Stem-and-Leaf Plot of Affective Occupational Commitment	285
A.2 Stem-and-Leaf Plot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	285
A.3 Stem-and-Leaf Plot of Normative Occupational Commitment	285
A.4 Normal Q-Q Plot of Affective Occupational Commitment	286
A.5 Normal Q-Q Plot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	286
A.6 Normal Q-Q Plot Normative Occupational Commitment	287
A.7 Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Affective Occupational Commitment	287
A.8 Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	288
A.9 Detrended Normal Q-Q Plot of Normative Occupational Commitment	288

A.10	Box-plot of Affective Occupational Commitment	289
A.11	Box-plot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	289
A.12	Box-plot of Normative Occupational Commitment	290
A.13	Histogram of Standardized Residuals of Affective Occupational Commitment	290
A.14	Histogram of Standardized Residuals of Continuance Occupational Commitment	291
A.15	Histogram of Standardized Residuals of Normative Occupational Commitment	291
A.16	Normal P-P Plot of Affective Occupational Commitment	292
A.17	Normal P-P Plot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	292
A.18	Normal P-P Plot of Normative Occupational Commitment	293
A.19	Scatterplot of Affective Occupational Commitment	293
A.20	Scatterplot of Continuance Occupational Commitment	294
A.21	Scatterplot of Normative Occupational Commitment	294

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In recent years, the concept of commitment has received increasing attention as a potential determinant of employees' performance and high productivity in various types of occupations and organisations. However, in the review of commitment literature, Reyes (1990) noted that while the general empirical literature on employees' commitment has generated over 70 articles, very few of these studies have used educational organisations as the unit of analysis. Furthermore, observation shows that trends of commitment studies on educational organisation have not indicated a significant change. This means there is a lack of empirical assessment of teachers' commitment to both the teaching occupation and school organisations.

The concept of commitment has received increasing attention for several reasons. For instance, the literature on commitment reveals that studies on occupational commitment are important for career development and progress because of the longitudinal nature of careers (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990). In addition, commitment is a critical issue in the development of occupational ability as commitment to an occupation helps one persist long enough to develop specialized skills (Perrow, 1986). Commitment is also crucial because it is associated with greater job effort and involvement (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 19982; Rosenholtz, 1989). In addition, occupational commitment may become an important source of occupational meaning

and continuity as organisations become more fluid and less able to guarantee employment security (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990). It has been suggested that commitment to occupation is necessary for teachers for the reason that it provides motivation to professionalize and pursue changes in their practice while dealing with the complex demands brought by these changes (Firestone & Pennel, 1993). However, Colarelli and Bishop (1990) observed that occupational commitment has yet to receive much attention in the commitment literature. Therefore, examining the determinants of occupational commitment in work behaviour and school practices is of particular significance.

Furthermore, studies of commitment in Malaysia have strongly recommended that further studies on commitment should be conducted (Hanifah, 1981; Mat Zain, 1993; Perumal, 1995; Hon, 1996). This could help improve the teaching profession in schools and school performance in generally, as Ramanathan (1988) found that teachers' lack of commitment reduces motivation. Moreover, studies on commitment may provide guidelines to understand factors that help retain teachers in their occupation.

Factors that help retain teachers in their profession are not universal because these factors can differ from one nation to another. For instance, whereas an improvement in the socio-economic situation of teachers has helped to retain many teachers in the teaching profession in some countries like Jordan and the Philippines, other countries such as Tanzania have not shown improvement (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1991). Thus, it seems evident that there is a strong need to conduct more